

Message Text

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67

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 NEA-10 ADP-00 ACDA-19 CIAE-00 PM-09 H-02

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15

USIA-12 OMB-01 GAC-01 MC-02 RSR-01 /136 W

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R 041600 Z APR 73

FM AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4553

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMCONSUL BELFAST

DIA WASHDC

USDAO LONDON

USCINCEUR VAININGEN GERMANY

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E. O. 11562: N/ A

TAGS: PINS/ EI

SUBJECT: PRESS REPORTS ON CLAUDIA INCIDENT

REF: DUBLIN 416, 423

1. FURTHER PRESS REPORTS ON CLAUDIA SEIZURE ADD LITTLE CONCRETE INFO AND MAY ALREADY BE AVAILABLE TO MOST ADDRESSEES. FOR RECORD, HOWEVER, THEY ARE SUMMARIZED HERE.

2. ALL DUBLIN PAPERS REPORT ON NEWS CONFERENCE GIVEN BY SHIP' S CAPTAIN, HANS LUDWIG FLUEGEL, IN HAMBURG. ACCORDING TO REPORTS, CAPTAIN DENIES CLAIM MADE BY OWNER THAT SHIP CONTAINED ONE HUNDRED TONS OF ARMS RATHER THAN " FIVE TONS" CAPTURED BY IRISH. CAPTAIN SAID THAT HE

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HAD EXPECTED ONE HUNDRED TONS TO BE LOADED IN LIBYA, BUT ONLY FIVE TONS CAME ABOARD. NOTHING HAD BEEN DUMPED AT SEA. ON OTHER HAND, " SOURCES CLOSE TO THE CLAUDIA' S CREW" ARE SAID TO CLAIM THAT AS MUCH AS FIFTY TONS OF ARMS WERE ON VESSEL AT ONE POINT.

3. CAPTAIN FLUEGEL IS QUOTED AS SAYING THAT, WHEN HE WAS CAPTURED BY IRISH, HE EXPECTED TO BE IN SERIOUS TROUBLE AND WAS SURPRISED TO BE ALLOWED DEPART IRELAND PROMPTLY WITHOUT INVESTIGATIONS. (THIS HAS ALSO BEEN PUZZLING OBSERVERS IN IRELAND, SINCE CLAUDIA WAS APPARENTLY IN TERRITORIAL WATERS WHEN SEIZED.)

4. SOME NEWSPAPERS, WITHOUT SPECIFYING SOURCES, SAY THAT NINE UNIFORMED LIBYAN SOLDIERS TOOK PART IN LOADING CLAUDIA AT TRIPOLI. ACCORDING TO THESE STORIES, LOADING WAS CARRIED OUT UNDER COVER OF DARKNESS, WITH TWO IRA MEN WATCHING.

5. PAPERS HERE ALSO QUOTE ISVESTIA STORY WHICH DENIES THAT RUSSIA HAS EVER SUPPLIED ARMS TO IRA AND ACCUSES BRITISH PRESS OF " PROVOCATIVE ANTI- SOVIET FUSS." " IRISH TIMES" NOTES THAT, WHILE ISVESTIA DENIES MOSCOW INVOLVEMENT, IT DOES NOT DENY RUSSIAN ORIGIN OF SOME OF ARMS ABOARD CLAUDIA.

6. COMMENT: NUMBER OF ASPECTS CONTINUE PUZZLING, BUT SIZE OF CLAUDIA' S ORIGINAL CARGO IS MORE IMPORTANT UNRESOLVED ISSUE. WHILE IT SEEMS WASTEFUL FOR VESSEL OF THIS SIZE TO TRAVEL WITH SO LIGHT A CARGO, SEEMS EVEN HARDER TO BELIEVE THAT IRA-- DESPITE DELUSIONS OF GRANDEUR-- WOULD HAVE BEEN ABLE TO HANDLE ONE HUNDRED TONS OF ARMS.
MOORE

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TRIPOLI
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